

CLEANING, DISINFECTING AND SANITIZING GUIDELINES

CLEANING	Removing dirt, grease, debris and many germs by scrubbing with soap (detergent) and water.
DISINFECTING	Killing disease causing germs on surfaces. This process is accomplished by use of bleach solutions, commercially prepared products (germicides) or physical agents such as high heat.
SANITIZING	Reducing the number of disease causing germs to a "safe level" by using one of the disinfecting methods.

Sanitizing/Disinfecting Schedule

All items must be cleaned prior to disinfecting

HOW OFTEN	ITEMS TO BE DISINFECTED	SOLUTION USED
Daily	Hard surfaced/washable toys (frequently mouthed by children) Crib rails Bathroom door knobs Bathroom sinks, sink faucet handles Toilets, flush handles Sink/faucet handles All washable floors Trash cans Telephone receivers Drinking fountains Kitchen counters Water tables (if used that day)	General Purpose/Soaking General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose Diaper Area General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose
Weekly	Cot frames (immediately, if soiled), door knobs, light switches, shelves or other hard surfaces touched by children Children's chairs Animal areas Cloth (washable) toys, dress up clothes Mats Low shelves Refrigerators	General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose Washed with detergent then rinsed and dried General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose
Monthly	Cots (immediately, if soiled) Carpets Shelves Walls Doors	General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose General Purpose
Before Use	Food preparation area Food serving tables (eating tables)	General Purpose General Purpose
After Use	Diapering area surfaces Food preparation area Food preparation tools, dishes, equipment and flatware Bottles, nipples and nipple covers	Diaper Area General Purpose Soaking Solution Heat Only
Immediately	Any surface that has been soiled with urine, stool, mucous, vomit, blood or nasal discharge	Diaper Area

You do not need to buy commercially sold disinfectants, since any of the recommended bleach solutions can be made easily at very little cost. However, you do need to make any bleach solutions each day because bleach loses its strength, and thus its effectiveness, as it is exposed to air. Store the solution in a labeled spray bottle in an area inaccessible to children.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NEW BLEACH CONCENTRATION

From the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education

Effective 3/1/2013

For those of you who use a diluted bleach solution as a sanitizing and disinfecting product in your early care and education programs, **the concentration of bleach solutions sold in stores has changed** in many areas of the country. The new bleach solution available in many stores is now 8.25% sodium hypochlorite solution (higher than the formerly available bleach solution of 5.25%-6%). Several companies have communicated to us that they have discontinued manufacturing the 5.25%-6% sodium hypochlorite bleach solution and it will no longer be available at many stores. The 8.25% solution is being produced by both brand name companies as well as companies that produce generic products. *Many of these products are now EPA-registered products as well.*



The NRC has been working with national experts and has determined that because of the variety of products available, **it is no longer possible to provide a generic bleach recipe for sanitizing and disinfecting in early care and education programs**. In addition, if you are using an EPA-registered product you should not be using a generic recipe, but should be following label instructions for use. [Appendix J](#) of *Caring for Our Children*, 3rd ed. has been revised to reflect these changes.

The NRC recommendation is to use EPA-registered products for sanitizing and disinfecting.



Follow the manufacturer's instructions for diluting the EPA-registered product for sanitizing or disinfecting, as well as for the contact time.

Click on the link below (to the NRC website) which illustrates where you can locate the EPA registration information on the label of your product:

[Instructions on how to determine this for the EPA-registered product you are using can be found here.](#)

These instructions are also part of the revised [Appendix J](#).

If you are not using an EPA-registered bleach product at this time, it is recommended that you contact the manufacturer to obtain their instructions for diluting the product for sanitizing and disinfecting, *including the contact time*.

